



Montgomery County Council

For Immediate Release

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Statement by Council President Blair Ewing On Release of the County Executive's Recommended Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2002

"The County Executive's recommended budget is a good first draft – and gives the Council something to work with. However, the devil is in the details.

"I have three areas of concern:

- 1) "The County Executive proposes to shift \$45 million designated for the capital budget in Fiscal Years 2001 and 2002 (PAYGO) to the operating budget. However, he has provided no list of specific capital projects that would be affected. County residents want to know what those choices are, and the Council needs this information right away. Also, the reduction in PAYGO, coupled with adjustments recommended in the six-year CIP, reduces the capital reserve in Fiscal Years 2002-04 by \$70 million, to extremely low levels.
- 2) "The County Executive proposes \$26 million in efficiencies in the general County Government budget and another \$2.6 million in Park & Planning but, again, provides no details. Again, we need this information right away.
- 3) "The County Executive projects \$131 million in increased resources over the December 12, 2000 Spending Affordability Guidelines approved by the Council and based on information given by the County Executive. While increased income tax distributions from the state in January and February account for \$23 million and the shifting of funds from the capital budget another \$45 million, that still doesn't explain the disparity in available resources. It is important to understand why the resources increased so much in just three months, given the need for accurate information in the spending affordability process."